

## **1210.13 Usage of the State Telephone System by State Employees**

Issued August 5, 1996

SUBJECT: Usage of the State Telephone System by State Employees.

APPLICATION: Executive Branch Departments and Sub-units.

PURPOSE: To establish statewide policy and procedures governing employee use of the State telephone system and State issued telephone credit cards.

CONTACT AGENCY: Department of Management and Budget (DMB) - Office of Financial Management (OFM).

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### **SUMMARY:**

State employees should use the State telephone system and State issued telephone credit cards only to conduct official State business.

State employees are prohibited from utilizing the State telephone system or a State issued telephone credit card to place personal long distance telephone calls, except as necessary to communicate unavoidable delays in scheduled work departure times, or to communicate unavoidable change in travel plans while in travel status, or as authorized by their supervisor based upon the circumstances involved.

Use of State telephones for personal local calls should be kept to a minimum.

Each department/agency is responsible for ensuring that its employees understand and comply with this policy on appropriate telephone usage. Although not required, agencies may utilize a written employee certification as a possible means to ensure that this policy is understood (see example - Exhibit A). If used, such certification should be maintained in the employee's personnel file at the agency where employed.

Notwithstanding the basic provisions of this procedure, any charges for telephone calls placed for personal purposes, along with applicable state and federal taxes, must be collected from the individual who placed the call. For reimbursements received during the same fiscal year in which the charge was paid by the State, an expenditure credit should be processed. All others should be credited to a miscellaneous revenue account.

Although detailed validation of telephone billings and maintenance of telephone usage logs are not required, state agencies should utilize review processes, appropriate for the circumstances, to monitor compliance with this policy and procedure.

As part of the overall process of reviewing telephone billings for approval prior to payment, local and long distance telephone charges should be reviewed by agency supervisory personnel or the department administrative/finance office for unusual usage prior to billing approval. Any suspected misuse that violates this policy and procedure should be investigated and, if such misuse persists, appropriate corrective action should be taken.

Agency internal auditors should include periodic review of compliance with this policy and procedure in their annual audit plans.

Whenever possible and cost effective, state agencies should consider placing software restriction on telephone lines to disable the ability to make long distance calls from work stations where there is no legitimate business need to make such calls.

APPLICABLE FORMS: Exhibit A - Suggested format for employee certification

#### PROCEDURES:

##### Employees:

- May be required to sign a certification acknowledging their understanding of this telephone usage policy and procedure.
- Must reimburse the State for any telephone calls, including applicable federal and state taxes that, notwithstanding the provisions of this procedure, are made for personal use.

##### Agencies:

- Must ensure that employees understand and comply with this policy and procedure. Agencies may require an employee certification for this purpose. Such certification may be obtained in a separate process or, where possible, combined with other similar periodic certifications (e.g., conflict of interest disclosure).
- Review telephone bills for unusual usage and maintain other monitoring processes, as appropriate, to help ensure compliance with this policy and procedure.
- If applicable, maintain employee certifications in personnel files, if certification is required.

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Procedure 1210.13

EXHIBIT A

Suggested Format for Employee Certification -  
State Telephone Usage Policy

Chief Financial Officer  
Department of

Dear :

I, , understand that usage of the State telephone system or a State issued telephone credit card for other than official State business or as authorized by my employer is prohibited, and all telephone charges are subject to audit, as provided in Section 1210.13 of the Administrative Guide to State Government.

In the event that, notwithstanding this policy, I use the telephone system for personal purposes, I will reimburse the State for such telephone charges plus applicable federal and state taxes.

If I misuse the State telephone system for personal purposes, I accept full responsibility for any administrative action taken against me relating to violation of this telephone usage policy.  
Sincerely,

Employee Signature Date

Division or Office